

Exercise #5

The “Communication Two-step”

In this exercise you learn a method/formula for talking with patrons who are irate and may be having trouble controlling their emotions and behaviors. The goal is to help them.

Remember: what people hear is much more important than what we say.

Remember, also: we need to acknowledge people’s emotions before we can resolve their problems.

You will work in pairs with each person getting a turn. Some of the transitions will seem awkward at first but will become more natural with practice.

Work with a partner to practice the following verbal skills:

Step A

1. Make personal contact
2. Be calm
3. Be empathetic and authentic
4. Accept the validity of people’s feelings, beliefs and emotions - we are concerned with behaviors
5. Use Mimesis
6. Maintain personal contact

Step B

1. Interrupt once you get the plot
 - a. Acknowledge importance: _____
 - b. Show respect and ask permission: _____
2. Speak the person’s language
 - a. Use the “E” word: _____
3. Reflect feelings and facts
4. Clarify and paraphrase
5. Seek verification: _____